

Developer Touts Plan For Plant City Development

By [Ray Reyes](#) of The Tampa Tribune

Published: January 11, 2008

PLANT CITY - If all goes according to a developer's plans, more than 1,200 acres adjacent to the demolished Coronet Industries phosphate factory soon will be home to a bustling industrial park with a mix of retail stores, recreational fields and work force housing.

That was the scenario presented by developer Steven Schafer to residents during a town hall meeting Wednesday at Hillsborough Community College's Plant City campus.

Schafer, the president of Michigan-based Schafer Development, said his proposed industrial park south of U.S. 92 and east of Park Road would be worth about \$800 million at maximum buildout. The cluster of light industry, offices and warehouse distribution centers will become "a huge tax base for Plant City" and create hundreds of jobs, Schafer said.

Highlights of the developer's plan include:

- Buildings with a total of 3.2 million square feet of space. Building heights would be limited to two stories.
- An old landfill on the property last used in the 1960s will be capped, and eight recreational fields will be built on top of it. Schafer will build the fields, but the city would maintain them.
- About 60,000 square feet are reserved for what Schafer called "neighborhood retail," which could include a doctor's office, sandwich shop, dry cleaners and day care services for the employees of the industrial park. "No big box" stores like Wal-Mart, Schafer said.
- Land will be set aside to build homes or apartments for employees.

Improvements to main access roads such as U.S. 92, Park and Coronet roads and Henderson Way are in the works. Schafer Development is also seeking to upgrade railroad crossings.

Schafer wants to build his development on the same land that was set to become Lakeside Station, which would have included about 2,600 homes. The developer of Lakeside Station backed off the project after the real estate market took a downturn, among other factors.

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